

XXIII.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

(Continued from p. 178.)

30. *Agassiz's Report on the Museum of Comparative Zoology.*

From Mr. Alexander Agassiz's report on the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College for 1880, we extract the following passage concerning the Birds:—

“The number of skins added is 1744, and includes about 600 mounted specimens. Among them are various species of Pheasants, Birds of Paradise, Pittas, Humming-birds, Manucodias, &c., as well as many less showy species of considerable rarity.

“There have been added also 25 mounted skeletons, besides nearly as many unmounted, and fifty sets of eggs, representing as many species. These are especially noteworthy, as being nearly all from the Argentine Republic, thoroughly identified, and beautifully prepared.

“The principal additions are from the West Indies and South America, including 300 skins from Santa Lucia, British West Indies, 370 from Trinidad and the island of Grenada, and 500 from the Argentine Uruguay, which represent over 200 species, forming an excellent suite of the birds of that immediate vicinity.”

31. *Barboza Du Bocage's 'Ornithology of Angola.'*

[Ornithologie d'Angola, ouvrage publié sous les auspices du Ministère de la Marine et des Colonies. Par J. V. Barboza du Bocage. Deuxième Partie. Royal 8vo. Lisbonne: 1881.]

We are much pleased to receive the second part of Prof. Barboza du Bocage's '*Ornithologie d'Angola*,' completing a most useful work. We could wish that Mr. Sharpe's edition of Layard's '*Birds of South Africa*' (commenced in 1875) were also finished. With these, and Gurney's '*Birds of Damara Land*,' we should then have a fine series of works of reference on the birds of the southern half of the African continent.

The avifauna of Angola, according to our author, is now known to comprehend 698 species. Of each of these the synonyms, characters, and localities are concisely given in the present work, besides other remarks where necessary. Coloured illustrations are given of the following species :—

- | | |
|--|---|
| Pl. V. <i>Pholidauges verreauxii</i> . | Pl. X. fig. 1. <i>Parus rufiventris</i> . |
| VI. <i>Lamprocolius acuticaudus</i> . | „ „ 2. <i>Hypsilornis salvadori</i> . |
| VII. <i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i> . | |
| VIII. fig. 1. <i>Mirafraga nigricans</i> . | II. fig. 1. <i>Cossypha bocagei</i> . |
| „ „ 2. <i>Anthus pallescens</i> . | „ „ 2. — <i>barbata</i> . |

32. *Blasius and Nehrkorn on Bornean Birds.*

[Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Vogelfauna von Borneo (nach den Sammlungen des Herrn Dr. Platen) von W. Blasius und A. Nehrkorn. Jahresh. d. Vereins für Naturwiss. zu Braunschweig, 1880–81.]

A list of 83 species, represented in two collections of birds from Borneo made by Dr. Platen in 1880, arranged in accordance with Count Salvadori's well-known memoir on Bornean birds. The exact dates, localities, and colours of the soft parts are given from notes of the collector. Remarks of the authors are added in many cases. Amongst the rarer species mentioned are *Lepocestes porphyromelas* and *Pityriasis gymnocephala*.

33. 'Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club.'

[Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club: a Quarterly Journal of Ornithology, vol. vi. October 1881, no. 4, and vol. vii. January 1882, no. 1. Cambridge, Mass.]

Both these numbers of our excellent contemporary contain much of interest to the general ornithologist. Besides Mr. Ridgway's articles noticed under his name below, the same author describes a supposed new Heron (*Ardea wardi*) from Florida, and gives us some very curious speculations concerning this form and its allies, *A. occidentalis*, *A. würdemanni*, and *A. herodias*. An important discovery by Mr. Brewster is that the lately described *Helminthophagæ (leuco-bronchiatis* and *lawrencii*) are hybrids between *H. pinis* and *H. chrysoptera*! Mr. Brewster also describes a new local

form of *Scops asio* from the coast-region of California as *Scops asio bendorei*, and Mr. N. C. Brown a new race of *Peucea ruficeps* from Texas as *Peucea ruficeps eremæca*. Besides this novelty, Mr. Brown, during his successful reconnaissance in South-western Texas, managed to obtain no less than seven examples of the rare *Dendræca chrysoparia*.

34. Dubois on certain Thrushes.

[Remarques au sujet de quelques Grives. Par Alph. Dubois. Bull. Soc. Zool. d. France, 1881, p. 142.]

M. Dubois's remarks are specially in reference to M. Vian's paper in a former number of this Bulletin (1880, p. 210) on the Thrushes of the *Oreocincla* group. M. Vian correctly vindicates the distinctness of *Turdus horsfieldi* of Java from *T. lunulatus* of Australia, and states that *Turdus hodgsoni*, Homeyer, = *Turdus mollissimus*, Blyth, nec *T. viscivorus* vel *bonapartei*. Notes on other species of *Turdus* are added.

35. Ewart on the Nostrils of the Cormorant.

[On the Nostrils of the Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). By Professor J. C. Ewart, M.D. Journ. Linn. Soc. Zool. xv. p. 455.]

A short description of the external nares and nasal passage in the Cormorant—the aperture of the former being very minute, as usual in the Steganopodes, in some of which it is, at least in the adult, entirely absent (e. g. *Plotus*).

36. Hamonville on African Birds in Europe.

[Observations sur quelques Oiseaux africains capturés dans l'Europe méridionale. Par C. Baron d'Hamonville. Bull. Soc. Zool. de France, 1881, p. 16.]

The author, in this paper, treats of *Alauda reboudia* of the Algerian Sahara, and comes to the conclusion that the supposed new Spanish Lark, *Calandrella bætica* of Dresser, is identical with it. Here, therefore, if the Baron is correct, is another African bird in Europe; but a great authority on Spanish birds assures us the Baron is not correct, and that the two species are not identical.

37. *Hoffmann's List of the Birds of Nevada.*

[Annotated List of the Birds of Nevada. By W. J. Hoffmann, M.D. Bull. U.S. Geol. and Geogr. Survey, vol. vi. no. 2 (1881).]

Dr. Hoffmann's list is based upon notes and observations made in Nevada by several parties during the field-season of 1871, completed by references to the reports of several prominent authorities who have likewise visited the district. Some interesting remarks on the distribution of the vegetation as affecting the avifauna of Nevada are prefixed. No other area of like extent within the United States is believed to present a greater variety of physical features. Amongst the less-known species in the list we may note *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*, "met with in the sandy deserts north-west of Fort Mogave, amongst the cactus and yucca;" *Spizella breweri*, "quite common in the northern and middle areas;" and *Icterus bullocki*, a regular summer visitant. In the appendix an accurate account of previous authorities on the birds of Nevada is given. An outline map of Nevada, showing the localities mentioned, concludes this useful memoir.

38. *Krukenberg on the Colouring-matter of Feathers.*

[Die Farbstoffe der Federn. Von Dr. C. Fr. W. Krukenberg, zweite Mitth. Vergl.-physiol. Studien, ii. Reihe, Abth. 1, p. 151.]

A continuation of the author's investigations already noticed (*Ibis*, 1881, p. 602) on the colouring-matter of birds' feathers. The present part deals with the consideration of turacoverdin (found in the green feathers of the Musophagidæ), zoarubin (from the red feathers of *Cicinnurus*), "ara-roth" (from the red feathers of Parrots), zoonerythrin, and corionilphurin (a yellow pigment detected in the yellow scales of the legs of *Milvus*). Turacoverdin is the first green feather-pigment that the author has been able to isolate. It contains a fair quantity of iron, but little copper or manganese. Its spectrum resembles that of turacin, from which latter pigment turacoverdin may be produced by long exposure to air or moisture, or by boiling.

39. *Lawrence on a new Subspecies of Loxigilla.*

[Description of a new Subspecies of *Loxigilla* from the Island of St. Christopher, West Indies. By George N. Lawrence. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1881, p. 204.]

Mr. Lawrence describes the form of *Loxigilla portoricensis* which occurs on St. Kitts as "var. *grandis*." It differs from the Portorican bird in its rather larger size, and in the colour of its under wing-coverts.

40. *Marschall and Pelzeln's 'Ornis Vindobonensis.'*

[*Ornis Vindobonensis*. Die Vogelwelt Wiens und seiner Umgebungen mit einem Anhang: die Vögel des Neusiedler See's. Von August Friedrich, Grafen Marschall, und August von Pelzeln. 8vo. Wien: 1882.]

The names of the authors of the present memoir on the birds of the environs of Vienna are a sufficient guarantee that the work has been carefully and elaborately prepared. The "*ornis vindobonensis*," according to Count Marschall and Herr von Pelzeln, comprehends 287 species. Amongst those which would be of special interest to western ornithologists we notice *Upupa epops*, *Calamodyta fluviatilis*, and *Erythrosterna parva* in the category of breeding species. A list of the birds of the Neusiedler See is appended, amongst which there are 25 species that have not yet occurred in the district of Vienna. .

41. *Nordenskiöld's 'Voyage of the 'Vega'.'*

[The Voyage of the 'Vega' round Asia and Europe, with a Historical Review of previous Journeys along the North Coast of the Old World. By A. E. Nordenskiöld. Translated by Alexander Leslie. 2 vols. Royal 8vo. London: 1881.]

The scientific work of the voyage of the 'Vega' will be hereafter published in a more elaborate form. But few naturalists will omit to read Baron Nordenskiöld's most interesting narrative, in which will be found a special chapter (vol. i. ch. iii.) devoted to the birds and mammals of Novaya Zemlya, and an account of the birds of the Chukch peninsula (vol. ii. p. 42), where *Eurynorhynchus pygmæus* was "served

at the gun-room table," besides numerous other references to Polar bird-life. We extract a few sentences on the birds of "Gooseland," which appear to be also of special interest:—

"Gooseland is a low stretch of coast, occupied by grassy flats and innumerable small lakes, which projects from the mainland of Novaya Zemlya between $72^{\circ} 10'$ and $71^{\circ} 30'$ N. lat. The name is a translation of the Russian Gusinnaja Semlja, and arises from the large number of Geese and Swans (*Cygnus bewickii*, Yarr.) which breed in that region. The Geese commonly place their exceedingly inconsiderable nests on little hillocks near the small lakes which are scattered over the whole of Gooseland; the powerful Swans, which are very difficult of approach by the hunter, on the other hand, breed on the open plain. The Swans' nests are so large that they may be seen at a great distance. The building-material is moss, which is plucked from the ground within a distance of two metres from the nest, which, by the excavation which is thus produced, is surrounded by a sort of moat. The nest itself forms a truncated cone, 0.6 metre high and 2.4 metres in diameter at the bottom. In its upper part there is a cavity, 0.2 metre deep and 0.6 metre broad, in which the four large greyish-white eggs of the birds are laid. The female hatches the eggs; but the male also remains in the neighbourhood of the nest. Along with the Swans and Geese, a large number of Waders, a couple of species of *Lestris*, an Owl, and other birds breed on the plains of Gooseland, and a few Guillemots or Gulls upon the summits of the strand-cliffs. The avifauna along the coast here is besides rather poor."

42. *Oates on the Birds of British Burma.*

[The Ornithology of British Burma. By Eugene W. Oates. British Burma Gazetteer. Vol. i. p. 569.]

The first volume of the new Gazetteer of British Burma contains some excellent general remarks on the rich avifauna of that region by Mr. E. W. Oates, to which is added a nominal list of the species (771 in all). Mr. Oates very appositely observes:—

"With a considerable portion of the country situated within

the tropics, with its immense seacoast-line, and with a land-frontier bordering on such interesting countries as China, Siam, and Malayana, Burma offers attractions to the ornithologist which few other countries can hold out. The number of known Burmese species of birds exceeds that of the whole of Europe by more than a hundred, while the number is more than half that found in the whole continent of India from the Himalayas to Ceylon, and from Scinde to Assam. And yet the list is very far from complete. With an increased number of observers the list would, undoubtedly, be increased to one thousand species."

43. *Ramsay on new Birds from the Solomon Islands and New Britain.*

[Descriptions of some new Birds from the Solomon Islands and New Britain. By Edward P. Ramsay, F.L.S., C.M.Z.S., &c., Curator of the Australian Museum, Sydney. Journ. Proc. Linn. Soc. Zool. xvi. p. 128.]

This is the paper spoken of by Canon Tristram (*anteà*, p. 133). It gives descriptions of *Ceyx sacerdotis* from New Britain, *Pomarea (Monarcha) ugiensis* from Ugi, *Calornis (Aplonis) feadensis* from "Fead" Island, *Carpophaga finschi* (no locality given), and *Baza gurneyi* from Ugi (*v. s.* p. 133). *Astur pulchellus* is a name given to *Astur soloensis*, Ramsay, ex inss. Salomonis; and *Ptilopus viridis*, Ramsay (P. L. S. N. S. W. iv. p. 73), is stated to be the female of *P. eugeniæ*.

44. *Rathbun's 'List of the Birds of Central New York.'*

[A Revised List of Birds of Central New York.—Based on the Observations of Frank R. Rathbun, H. Gilbert Fowler, Frank S. Wright, Samuel F. Rathbun, in the Counties of Cayuga, Onondaga, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates.—Collated and prepared for publication by Frank R. Rathbun. 8vo. Auburn, N. Y.]

This list is the result of ten years' observations, notes, and field-work of the four gentlemen whose names are given on the title-page. Its reliability is vouched for by Dr. Elliott Coues, who regards it as the leading authority upon the birds of Central New York, the avifauna of which is thus shown to embrace 236 species.

45. *Ridgway on a new North-American Hawk.*

[On a Tropical American Hawk to be added the North-American Fauna. By Robert Ridgway. Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club. vi. p. 207.]

The species is *Buteola brachyura*, of which an adult male was obtained in Florida by Mr. G. A. Boardman in February 1882. The question of the relationship of *Buteo fuliginosus*, Selater, to this bird is carefully discussed. Mr. J. H. Gurney and Mr. Salvin now agree in considering *Buteo fuliginosus* to be merely a black phase of *B. brachyura*; but Mr. Ridgway is, apparently, not quite convinced that such is the case.

46. *Ridgway on the Desiderata of the U.S. National Collection.*

[List of special Desiderata among North-American Birds. By Robert Ridgway. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1881, p. 207.]

The list is a long one, but is chiefly made up of species of which the young plumages are required. The North-American species actually unrepresented in the U.S. National Collection, as may be well supposed, are very few in number.

47. *Shufeldt on the Osteology of the North-American Tetraonidæ.*

[Osteology of the North-American Tetraonidæ. By Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, U.S.A. Bull. U.S. Geol. & Geogr. Survey, vi. p. 319.]

This is an elaborate account of the osteology of the North-American Grouse, illustrated by eight plates, principally devoted to the various bones of *Centrocercus* and *Cupidonia*. Of the former of these genera the bones of the chick and immature form (two months old) are likewise figured. It would have been very convenient for classification-purposes if the author had stated the osteological differences between the six genera (as usually allowed) in a concise form. He does, however, inform us that, from an osteological point of view, he can see no reason why *Pediæcetes* and *Cupidonia* should not be united.

48. *Shufeldt on the Osteology of Lanius.*

[Osteology of *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*. By Dr. R. W. Shufeldt. Bull. U.S. Geol. & Geogr. Survey, vol. vi. p. 351.]

Dr. Shufeldt gives us in this essay a complete description of the bones of *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides* (as our American friends call the south-western form of *L. ludovicianus*), drawn up in his usual exact style, and illustrated by a plate.

49. *Sharpe's Catalogue of the Timeliidæ.*

[Catalogue of the Passeriformes, or Perching Birds, in the Collection of the British Museum.—Cichlomorphæ: Part III. Containing the first portion of the Family Timeliidæ (Babbling-Thrushes). By R. Bowdler Sharpe. 8vo. London. Published by order of the Trustees, 1881.]

In the sixth volume of the 'Catalogue of the Birds of the British Museum' we have Mr. Sharpe's account of 407 species, referred to five subfamilies (Brachypodinæ, Troglodytinæ, Miminæ, Myiadectinæ, and Ptilonorhynchinæ). These seem to us to be five very natural groups, except as regards the inclusion of the Dippers in the subfamily Troglodytinæ*. But we can see no reasons whatever for placing any of these groups in the family "Timeliidæ;" nor has Mr. Sharpe attempted to give us any of the slightest importance. Indeed, judging by the "synopsis of subfamilies," given p. 1, the inclusion of the Miminæ, Myiadectinæ, and Ptilonorhynchinæ in the Timeliidæ cannot have been originally contemplated. Mr. Sharpe himself admits that this position of the Myiadectinæ is "not very satisfactory," but seems to have placed them here because Mr. Seebohm omitted them from his volume on the Sylviidæ! As for the Bowerbirds, we are at a loss to imagine what can justify their association with the Timeliidæ. Surely it would have been better to have left them among the Sturnidæ, as they had not been already taken next to the Paradiseidæ.

* In spite of their "domed nests" the Dippers are, in our opinion, more nearly allied to the Thrushes than to the Wrens, though quite sufficiently distinct to constitute a family of themselves—that is, a family of the same rank as other ordinarily recognized families of Oscines.

We observe with regret another unnecessary change in the nomenclature of a familiar genus in the present volume. When Vieillot, in 1807, established the genus "*Troglodytes*," he certainly intended the *Motacilla troglodytes* to be its type. To ascertain this *positively*, it is only necessary to refer to his subsequently published 'Analyse.' Writing in 1807 only of American birds, he naturally did not mention the European type, but only the American form, which he included in the same genus. It seems to us, therefore, quite erroneous to assume that the latter was his type, and to remove the generic name "*Troglodytes*" to a group which does not now include the *Motacilla troglodytes*. Few will follow Mr. Sharpe in this matter, any more than they have in the similar course he has adopted as regards the generic term *Tinnunculus*.

The species provided with new names in this volume are eight—namely, *Tylas alfredi* and *T. fulviventris* from S.W. Madagascar, *Cinnicerthia olivascens* from Colombia, *Thryothorus melanogaster* from Veragua, *Thr. amazonicus* and *Thr. griseopectus* from the Upper Amazons, *Thr. paucimaculatus* from Ecuador, and *Mimus elegans* from the Bahamas. *Urocichla* is a new generic term proposed for *Pnoepyga longicaudata*, Moore. The following species are figured:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| Pl. I. <i>Chloropsis viridinucha</i> . | Pl. XII. fig. 1. <i>Campylorhynchus</i> |
| II. <i>Hemixus cinereus</i> . | <i>pardus</i> . |
| III. <i>Iole rufigularis</i> . | " " 2. — <i>gularis</i> . |
| IV. <i>Criniger verreauxi</i> . | XIII. <i>Thryothorus bairdi</i> . |
| V. — <i>frater</i> . | XIV. fig. 1. <i>Thr. fasciiventris</i> . |
| VI. fig. 1. <i>Criniger finschi</i> . | " " 2. — <i>melanogaster</i> . |
| " " 2. — <i>palawanensis</i> . | XV. " 1. — <i>amazonicus</i> . |
| VII. <i>Xenocichla albigularis</i> . | " " 2. — <i>griseopectus</i> . |
| VIII. <i>Chlorocichla occidentalis</i> . | XVI. " 1. <i>Anorthura fumigata</i> . |
| IX. <i>Pycnonotus simplex</i> . | " " 2. — <i>pacifica</i> . |
| X. — <i>pusillus</i> . | XVII. <i>Uropsila leucogastra</i> . |
| XI. <i>Cinnicerthia olivascens</i> . | XVIII. fig. 1. <i>Cyphorhinus salvini</i> . |
| | " " 2. — <i>modulator</i> . |

The woodcuts are most acceptable additions to this and preceding volumes of the Catalogue ; but surely the tarsus and toes of a bird should not in these days be called its "*leg*" ! (see pp. 120, 240, 268, &c.).

50. *Stearns and Coues's 'New-England Bird-Life.'*

[New-England Bird-Life, being a Manual of New-England Ornithology. Revised and edited from the Manuscript of Winfrid A. Stearns by Dr. Elliott Coues. Part I. Oscines. 8vo. Boston: 1881.]

This is a volume which will, without doubt, be highly appreciated by our transatlantic readers, though it may not, of course, present the same amount of interest to the general ornithologist. But a good local fauna is always acceptable; and in this case the name of the editor gives us an ample guarantee of the accuracy and completeness of the work. The introduction comprises "general definitions," a short treatise on the "preservation of specimens," and another upon "faunal areas," all of which will be useful to the student. A summary notice of previous writings on New-England ornithology follows, arranged in chronological order. In the main portion of the text short characters are given of each species, and full remarks as to occurrence, distribution, breeding-habits, and other particulars,—just enough, in our opinion, to render the work useful to the local naturalist, without overloading its pages. The woodcuts, some of which seem to our eyes to be old friends, are not, if we may presume to say so, quite on a par with the general execution of the work. Some of them are coarsely drawn, not to say ugly.

51. *Stone's 'Few Months in New Guinea.'*

[A few Months in New Guinea. By Octavius C. Stone, F.R.G.S. London: 1880. 1 vol. sm. 8vo, 258 pp.]

Mr. Stone passed about three months at Port Moresby and its vicinity in 1875-76, with Messrs. Petterd and Broadbent as collectors, and made a fine collection of birds, embracing examples of 116 species, of which the names are given in the appendix. The narrative of his residence in this strange land, though not exciting, will be read with interest by naturalists. Mr. Stone penetrated about 25 miles into the interior from Port Moresby, and claims to be the first Englishman, after Mr. Wallace, that had shot a Paradise-bird (*Paradisaea ragiana*). We can fully sympathize with him as, on this occa-

sion, he stood on the Farunumo range, gazing eagerly towards the great Mount Owen-Stanley, and lamenting his ineffectual efforts to reach it.

52. '*Stray Feathers*,' vol. ix. pts. 5 and 6.

[*Stray Feathers*: a Journal of Ornithology for India and its Dependencies. Edited by Allan Hume. Vol. ix. nos. 5 & 6. Royal 8vo. Calcutta: 1880.]

In the double part of '*Stray Feathers*' for 1880 (just received in this country), Mr. Hume has done us the honour to reprint Major Biddulph's article on the Birds of Gilgit, which appeared in '*The Ibis*' for 1881! This may, in subsequent ages, raise a curious question of priority! Mr. Hume now describes at full length the new Pheasant, *Callophasis humie*, from Manipur (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1881, p. 608), and gives an amusing account of his adventures in relation to it. It is nearest to *Callophasis ellioti*. Mr. Hume also describes *Persicula manipurensis*, sp. nov., obtained during the same expedition.

XXIV.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

We have received the following letters addressed to the Editors of '*The Ibis*':—

Australian Museum, Sydney.

SIRS,—I strongly suspect that my *Ptilopus*? *corriei*, from the New Hebrides, may prove to be the *Columba tannensis* of Latham (Bp. Consp. Av. ii. p. 14). I am by no means even sure that it is a *Ptilopus*, and may not belong to a distinct genus. With respect to my *Macropygia rufa*, from the same group of islands, some ornithologists are of opinion that it is the *Columba ferruginea* of Forster; but this can only be ascertained by comparison with the type. If we go by Gray, Forster's bird is not a *Macropygia* at all, but a *Phlegænas*, and Bonaparte places it under the genus *Columba* (op. cit. ii. p. 14, sp. 7). It would be of advantage if some of your readers could find time to look this matter up. I have given very